

Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and notes on
Newfoundland and Labrador's
Intangible Cultural
Heritage Program

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Seeds to Supper Festival Aug 13-21

It is finally here! The Seeds to Supper Festival, the third annual Folklife Festival of Newfoundland and Labrador kicks off on Saturday, August 13th. We're starting off with a busy day: the 53rd Annual Field Farm Day on Brookfield road, a workshop at the St. John's Farmers Market, and an edible wild plants demonstration at MUN Botanical Gardens.

One of the exciting things lined up is our Food, Folklore and Tourism Workshop, being held at the Cupids Legacy Centre, Cupids, Monday, August 15, from 1pm – 4:30 pm. What are the challenges faced by tourism operators in terms of developing culinary tourism products? What do they need to meet industry standards? In this workshop local tourism operators and business owners, along with visitor service people, and heritage representatives, will give their input what visitors and locals want, and what they need.

One of our food industry guests is Canada's Top Chef participant Todd Perrin. Todd began his career in the early 1990's, enrolling in The Culinary Institute of Canada at Holland College in PEI. Upon graduation, he worked at The Lodge at Kananaskis in Alberta and then at a private hotel near Zurich, Switzerland. Currently, he owns and operates The Chef's Inn, a B&B in downtown St. John's, Newfoundland that he runs with his family. With his own place, he sources the freshest local ingredients from his own backyard, neighbours' farms and his root cellar, practicing farm-to-table whenever possible. His goal as a chef is to bring simple food to the next level.

For full details and the speakers' biographies visit www.seedstosupper.ca. This workshop is sponsored in part by the Cupids Legacy Centre and the Town of Bay Roberts.

This is a free workshop, but people must pre-register with Melissa at ichprograms@gmail.com or call 1-888-739-1892 ext 3.

(Photo courtesy Chef Todd Perrin: Lobster salad, baby greens, nasturtium, coriander, basil, parsley, pansy petals with Lobster & Tomato Vin.)

An Evening with Century Farmers

By Melissa Squarey

Have you ever wondered about farming on the Avalon? Do you wonder how people were provided with fresh food in our climate? Well, come join the Seeds to Supper crowd for an extra special event on August 16th at 7:30 p.m. at Lesters on Pearltown Road, St. John's. We are hosting two of the area's century farmers: The Lester family and the Ruby family in a panel discussion concerning their agricultural history and modernization.

Host Kevin Aucoin, of the Agricultural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, will sit down with Leonard and Lena Ruby, and Jimmy and Michelle Lester, and share stories about farming past, present, and future.

The Lesters have a long history of farming in the area. It began when John Lester came to Newfoundland in 1832 to work for Sir James Pearl who had recently been approved for a large Estate in an area now part of Mount Pearl. Mr. Lester was just a boy of 14. He worked for Sir James and later his widow Anne Pearl for some 10-12 years. On her death she gave John Lester 100 acres of their original Estate. He sold this land and purchased some 100 acres on what is now the main farm on Brookfield Road. On his death in 1893 John Lester passed his farm over to his sons.

Today Jimmy Lester, represents the 6th generation Lester to continue farming in this area. This is one of 18 Century Farms designated in Newfoundland. Jimmy and his wife Michelle produce vegetable crops, bedding plants and flowers and operate the Lester Catering facility on Pearl Town Road.

Westvale Farms was established by William Ruby who homesteaded in the wilds of what is now Goulds starting in 1850. Like Mr Lester he too emigrated from Southern England however Mr. Ruby was already married with family. By 1863 his farm was being developed. He later acquired 2-50 acre- lots nearby for his two sons. The original farm produced mostly vegetable crops for sale in the area. Brothers Cyril, Eric and Leonard took over Westvale Farms in the 1930's. They expanded dairy production to a 70 cow Holstein Herd and continued to grow vegetables for local sale. They maintained a registered Dairy Herd of Holsteins for over 40 years, retiring in the late 1980's.

Leonard and Lena Ruby continue to grow vegetables on the original farm today where others might choose to retire and travel. This seems to reflect their close connection to the soil. Westvale Farms were awarded the Century Farm designation by the Newfoundland & Labrador Agricultural History Society.

Both the Lester and Ruby families have demonstrated a strong commitment to farming over many generations. Come join the Ruby and Lester families for an evening with century farmers!



An Evening with Century Farmers: The Rubys and Lesters

Date: Tuesday, August 16th, 2011

Time: 7:30pm

Free admission

Location: Lester's Catering, Pearltown Rd., St. John's

All Purpose Pony Hauls Heavy Heritage

Local Woman keeping pony tradition alive.

By Melissa Squarey

Elizabeth (Liz) Chafe was born in the Goulds just outside of St. John's, NL. For as long as Liz can remember she's loved Newfoundland Ponies. She says "As a child they were my way of transportation to Bidgood's (local grocery) and they were my best friends. I spent most of my time as a kid with ponies, mine or someone else's."

Liz has owned horses in the past but she says that the Newfoundland ponies were always special to her. Liz explained the first time she rode on a Newfoundland pony,

When I turned 12 my mother allowed me to get a pony. I had to paint a local garage with my brother to make enough money to pay for it. At the time I had only made enough money to buy half a pony, we are only talking about 25 dollars for the pony. My brother who knew I wanted the pony gave me his half of earnings from painting the garage and that made enough for me to buy it. I ran up to the neighbours and bought the pony. I rode him home that day and that was the first time I rode a Newfoundland pony.

The Newfoundland pony is notorious for having a huge amount of endurance, which is useful for working the terrain of its native province.

"The ponies have such big hearts, they are unique to any other pony out there. There's nothing they would not do for you if they trust you" proclaims Liz who now has 12 of her own. Liz explained that the ponies were used as workhorses in the past for hauling and lugging whatever was needed, she says "Lord Faulkland brought the ponies to the Southern shore of Newfoundland and other areas like Conception Bay were big on pony use in the past."

Liz raises a unique concern where the ponies are involved. She says "Today, the ponies aren't being used in the same ways as in the past. I'm concerned because they are losing their job and aren't being needed as often. Mostly people only used the ponies for riding." Liz says that only a few people use the ponies in the older ways and this is mostly for educating the pony heritage in the province.

Liz says "Many people want to change the breed of the ponies to adapt them in ways that aren't useful to the breed standard." For example, Liz explained to me that people want to change the width of the Newfoundland pony's chest through breeding practices. These breeders want a pony with a wider chest structure but Liz disagrees with this practice saying,

"The reason for the narrow chest in the Newfoundland pony is so that it can move through the dense forest in this province on the moose trails. You can't take a wide chested animal through those moose paths in the woods. In the past, the people weren't cutting paths through the woods so they could get the ponies through to haul wood out, that's why they have a narrow chest."

Liz loves her ponies, she says "They have such big hearts, some even work themselves to death for their owners." Liz's ponies are indeed loving and friendly. Upon arrival they ran up to the fence to see me and what I was doing. "There are only about 400 ponies registered since 1979, and only about 200 who are able to reproduce." says Liz, "They live for about 35 years and are good at almost all of the different activities you'd want to use them for. They are patient and quick learners and because of my love for them I don't want to see the ponies changed. I don't want to lose them."

From the moment Liz wakes up in the morning her priority is to take care of her ponies. She has been raising them since she





was a kid and her love for them comes through easily when you speak to her. Once the ponies are fed and turned out Liz makes little time for herself in between running a grooming business and speaking with anyone who stops to see the ponies along their travels.

She loves to speak about the Newfoundland pony with any tourists who drop by. Liz says,

“I like to share the pony’s history with them. A lot of people don’t even know we have our own breed of pony. It’s not easy to get promoted as a place where people are able to see the Newfoundland pony. For a lot of tourists passing by the Southern Shore they never knew about my ponies until the passes along. It’s important to get the word out there.”

To hear Elizabeth Chafe’s interview visit <http://tinyurl.com/LizChafe>

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Conference to explore culture’s role in regional development

Culture and identity are inextricably linked, but what about their connection to economic development?

Industries like manufacturing, energy and technology are all considered drivers of development. This fall, an international conference in St. John’s will explore the power of culture to contribute to regional and economic sustainability.

Presented by Memorial University’s Harris Centre, “Culture, Place and Identity at the Heart of Regional Development” will take place October 13th-15th, 2011, at the Delta Hotel in St. John’s. The conference will feature presentations, both academic and practice-based, from around the province, the country and the world, with a specific focus on islands and remote communities.

Along with presentations, performances and exhibits, six internationally renowned keynote speakers will also share their stories. Because of the conference’s focus on culture, identity and place, performance will be a central feature of the program, with an artistic program mirroring the themes of the conference program.

The artistic program will showcase artists (professional and amateur) and tradition bearers of Newfoundland and Labrador. Local artists and tradition bearers will be provided with stages throughout the conference to exhibit their musical, visual arts, storytelling and other skills. As well, artists and tradition bearers visiting from outside the province will be provided with showcases in local venues to share their skills with local audiences.

Conference registration for “Culture, Place and Identity at the Heart of Regional Development” is open to everyone, with some of the performances will be open to both registrants and the general public alike.

For more information, please visit www.naf2011.com or find us on Facebook.



“Have Store, Will Travel” - Twillingate Group Relocates a Historic Merchant Shop

By Dr. David Clarke, 1st Vice-Chair, Isles Wooden Boat Building Committee

Few buildings are as well travelled as an old store now resting on Twillingate’s North Island. In the early 1900s it was used by the Howlett family as a retail shop at Durrell, on Twillingate’s South Island. In 1926 it was acquired by Ashbournes, Ltd., which hauled the building to a new location. It was moved a second time in 1951. In the 1980s the old store was bought by Gordon Bath, who hauled it to another part of Durrell, and later willed it to his Nephew, Danny Bath (During the Bath family’s ownership the building was moved a fourth time). By 2009 the building was in disrepair. Danny was forced to consider tearing it down, though he hoped someone would relocate the structure and work for its preservation. The challenge was taken up by the Isles Wooden Boat Building Committee.

Under Chair Sterling Elliott, the Committee was looking for new projects when Mr. Bath proposed donating the building to them. By the Summer of 2010 Committee members had fundraised to acquire a piece of land near our community partners, the Twillingate Museum & Craft Shop on North Island, and had successfully petitioned the Twillingate Council to declare the store a Municipal Heritage Structure. In July Committee members began temporary repairs. Rather than transport the building by flatbed, the Committee decided to recreate an aspect of traditional Newfoundland culture that has almost disappeared – the house haul. The old store would be towed from South to North Island by boat and then moved, at least in part, by human muscle. In June of 2011 the building was towed from Mr. Bath’s property to nearby Oxford’s Beach, using heavy equipment provided by Council. After Committee members, led by Foreman Alf Manuel, attached more than two dozen barrels to the building for stability, it was ready for sea.

On the morning of 19 July the old store proudly “set sail,” towed by long liner. Among the crowds who lined the hills, or accompanied the move, to view the building’s progress, few had ever seen such an operation; no locals can recall another building being towed around Twillingate’s Long Point. After a progress of just over four hours the building was landed in Snellin’s Cove, while locals and tourists looked on. With more help from Council, it was then dragged into place for the house haul.

This event went ahead on 27 July as part of the Fish, Fun & Folk Festival. Using the traditional method of blocks and tackle to increase pulling power, dozens of volunteers were able to move the store about 150 feet, while Otto Young sang the “Johnny Poker,” a traditional hauling cadence. By all accounts the “house” haul was a great success, perhaps the most photographed and filmed attraction in Twillingate history!

Two days after the haul, Byron Rogers, one of Council’s heavy equipment operators, helped shift the historic retail store the final yards to its new home alongside the Museum. Renovations on the structure are expected to begin in 2012, and it is hoped the building will be used not only to celebrate its own unique history, but to promote the art of wooden boat building, a primary aim of the Committee. The project was not simply the work of one group. Many people and organizations contributed to the success of this project, including Minister French and the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, which provided a \$3,000.00 grant. It was truly a community effort, and we thank you all!



Healthy Aging Pilot Project

By Kim Shipp, AHI

The Association of Heritage Industries (AHI), through the Department of Health and Wellness' Healthy Aging Initiative, launched its own the Healthy Aging Project in the fall of 2009. An organization mandated to connect heritage communities, promote stewardship and the development of heritage resources, AHI has been interested in investigating how museums, archives and heritage sites can attract seniors as volunteers, staff and visitors. Understanding that demographic changes in communities throughout the province have translated into difficulties for heritage organizations in attracting and retaining staff and volunteers, AHI aimed to address these challenges.

The first phase of the project has focused on engaging seniors as volunteers and to meet that end two pilots were created; one in the Exploits Valley and the other in the Winterton and Heart's Content area. A volunteer recruitment coordinator was hired in each region. Claudette Squires, who led the volunteer recruitment campaign in Winterton and Heart's Content, reflects on her experiences with the Winterton Boat Museum:

The Healthy Aging Pilot Project was a planned recruitment of senior volunteers to work in established community groups or organizations. The Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador, operating out of the community of Winterton in Trinity Bay, recognized from the very beginning the project's purpose and dovetailed their needs directly with the project goals of volunteer recruitment for seniors.

It serves the purpose here to underline the fact that rural communities have a reservoir of untapped senior talent and the willingness to work in the best interest and good will of their communities. This was exemplified in the fact that the Wooden Boat Museum recruited twenty-four new volunteers eager to work in the assigned tasks of this organization.

Several examples illustrate the project's success, including Winterton's Heritage Night, which this year consisted of a presentation of old photos, story telling (an art that is dwindling), historical skits of the early days of the SUF dating back to 1867 brought together in a folk festival atmosphere. The mug-up of this event was the traditional figgy buns and lassy buns prepared by mostly new volunteers in keeping with an established tradition.

Another highlight was in the recruitment of an older gentleman who hadn't played his "squeeze box" in over 15 years. This new volunteer, with a bit of encouragement, held his own with the other musicians and received a warm welcome and round of applause for his efforts. In addition, this gentleman promises that it will not be another 15 years and has already placed an order for a new and more modern "squeeze box". Time and time again good will proved itself as a key ingredient to bond established groups and perspective volunteers of any age. It goes without saying that seniors of any age and of any ability should be welcomed, accepted and appreciated for their talents and their generosity. They are a joy to work with!

Overall, more than forty volunteers were recruited for the participating organizations, the Winterton Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Mizzen Heritage Society, the Northern Arm Heritage Committee, the Botwood Heritage Society, and the Peterview Heritage Society. The second phase, which will hopefully start this summer, plans to look at programming for seniors in heritage institutions.



Root Cellar Roundup

By Crystal Braye

With the end of the root cellar project only a few weeks away, the Heritage Foundation and the Agricultural History Society is currently wrapping up the fieldwork portion of this project. After spending the summer trekking through backwoods, trudging through tall wet grass, and being guided into the nooks and crannies of individuals' yards we have collected information on more than sixty cellars in the Avalon region.

Some of these cellars have long been abandoned, with nothing remaining but holes in the earth lined with stone that once formed the cellar walls. Some have been completely reclaimed by nature, leaving behind little more than a depression in the ground indicating the location where a cellar once stood.

We have also come across a number of root cellars that have fallen into disuse or have been completely abandoned by their owners. Without regular maintenance, these cellars are slowly collapsing as they are exposed to weather and the wooden frames and supports begin to rot away.



In other cases, the heritage value of root cellars has been recognized. Projects have been undertaken to restore neglected or abandoned cellars to their original condition. In 2003, Bay Roberts Heritage Society reconstructed two cellars along the Shoreline Heritage Walk. Located in French's Cove these rebuilt cellars found alongside the remnants of several more, serve as a tangible symbol honouring the history of settlement in the area.



In addition to documenting the historical significance of root cellars, this project has also explored contemporary root cellar practices in the province. We have identified a number of cellars in use today that date back to the early twentieth century, some which have been in continuous use since they were constructed. Built in 1820 by Patrick Murray, the root cellar located at Murray's Garden and Horticultural Services in Portugal Cove has been in

continuous use for almost two hundred years, making it the longest used cellar we have encountered during the project.

While the number of root cellars found in Newfoundland has declined significantly since they are no longer a matter of necessity, they have not disappeared completely. Root cellars have continued to be constructed and adapted to include more modern building materials, such as concrete in place of stone, and are now typically wired for electricity. As movements towards more sustainable and healthy lifestyles gain ground, interest in alternative cold storage methods seems to be on the rise. Looking to our roots in the perpetuation of this tradition reveals the ways in which cellars can remain valuable and relevant in modern times.

The root cellars that have been documented during this project represent only a small fraction of the cellars that can be found throughout our province. The Avalon region alone has revealed hundreds of cellars, and it is no doubt that each region can reveal something unique about local food storage practices. At the end of the project, the HFNL will make available a guide to documenting root cellars for any individuals, groups or communities wishing to dig into their own roots and take on a cellar inventory project of their own.

(Top photo, abandoned cellar, Brigus. Bottom photo, reconstructed cellar, Bay Roberts Shoreline Heritage Walk.)